

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: OCON, NATO, MILI
SUBJECT: TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE (TAD)

REF: STATE 303627 DTG 210127ZDEC77.

1. ON 30 JANUARY, WE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING RESPONSE TO
THE US LETTER (REFTEL) FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE IEPG
NATIONAL ARMAMENTS DIRECTORS (MAININI). MISSION VIEWS
FOLLOW SEPTTEL.

2. BEGIN TEXT.

- ROMA, 29 JANUARY 1978
- DEAR AMBASSADOR,
- THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND LETTER OF THE 21ST OF
DECEMBER 1977. WE HAVE EXAMINED IT WITH INTEREST WITHIN
THE APPROPRIATE BODY OF THE INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN PROGRAMME
GROUP AND CONSIDER IT A CONSTRUCTIVE AND VALUABLE CONTRIBU-
TION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE
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GROUP AND THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA ON DEFENCE EQUIPMENT
WHICH WE HOPE WILL START IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

- WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY YOUR STATEMENT THAT THE UNITED
STATES ATTACH THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO THE DIALOGUE
BETWEEN NORTH AMERICA AND THE IEPG, AS A MEANS TO IMPROVE
ALLIANCE COOPERATION IN VARIOUS FIELDS, AND WERE PLEASED TO

NOTE YOUR WILLINGNESS TO SEEK INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES TO BUY EUROPEAN DEFENCE EQUIPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DIALOGUE.

- IN WHAT CONCERNS THE MODALITIES OF THE FUTURE TALKS WE FEEL THAT MOST OF THE PROPOSALS MADE BY YOU FALL WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK ALREADY SET UP BY THE IEPG AND COULD BE DEALT WITH ACCORDINGLY.

- THERE SEEMS IN PARTICULAR TO EXIST A BROAD CONSENSUS TO CONDUCT CONVERSATIONS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL ARMAMENT DIRECTORS. FOR A FIRST PHASE, AT LEAST, WE SUGGEST USE BE MADE OF THE PRESENT CNAD MACHINERY WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR MODIFICATIONS. WE FEEL THAT SUCH A MACHINERY WOULD ALLOW AN ADEQUATE CONDUCTION OF THE DIALOGUE AS IT IS NOW CONCEIVED AND AS IT HAS BEEN AGREED UPON AT POLITICAL LEVEL BY THE IEPG MEMBERS.

- THERE IS ALSO ANOTHER POINT THAT I PERSONALLY FEEL SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND: THE IEPG'S SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN ORGANIZING EUROPEAN COLLABORATION HAS CONFIRMED THE USEFULNESS OF A PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO PROBLEMS, AVOIDING TOO HIGH A PROFILE THAT WOULD GIVE RISE, ALSO IN THE PUBLIC OPINION, TO EXPECTATIONS WHICH MIGHT COMPLICATE PROCEEDINGS. I FEEL THAT THE USE OF AN EXISTING CHANNEL SUCH AS CNAD, WHILE NOT HAMPERING PROGRESS ON SUBSTANCE, WOULD ENSURE AN ADEQUATE PROFILE.
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- CONCERNING THE AGENDA, WE BELIEVE THAT ON THE BASIS OF THE ITEMS PROPOSED IN THE INDEPENDENT EUROPEAN PROGRAMME GROUP'S STATEMENT OF THE 2ND OF DECEMBER 1977 SUFFICIENT ELEMENTS ARE ALREADY AT HAND TO SET THE TALKS GOING SOON.

- WE HOPE IT SHALL BE POSSIBLE TO DO SO, ALSO IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE DIALOGUE'S MOMENTUM.

- AS TO THE ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION TOPICS MENTIONED IN GENERAL TERMS IN YOUR LETTER, WE SHALL CERTAINLY TAKE THEM INTO DUE CONSIDERATION AND SEEK THE GUIDANCE OF THE IEPG AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL UPON THE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS WHICH WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING FROM YOU.

- PROVIDED THAT THE AGENDA OUTLINED BY US ON THE 2ND OF DECEMBER IS ACCEPTABLE TO YOU FOR THE FIRST PHASE OF THE CONVERSATIONS, THUS ALLOWING THESE TO START VERY SOON, FURTHER IDEAS AND PROPOSITIONS COULD BE DEALT WITH AS TALKS PROGRESS. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD LET ME KNOW YOUR REACTION TO SUCH A PROPOSAL.

- FINALLY, LET ME SAY THAT YOUR VIEWS ON THE ESSEN-

TIAL PURPOSES OF THE DIALOGUE HAVE BEEN RECEIVED BY US WITH
INTEREST AND WILL BE STUDIED.

- LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU I AM, DEAR
AMBASSADOR, YOURS VERY SINCERELY (SIGNED MAININI), CHAIRMAN
OF THE IEPG/NAD. END TEXT. BENNETT

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